



---

Kāṣṣgarī on the Beliefs and Superstitions of the Turks

Author(s): Robert Dankoff

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 95, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1975), pp. 68-80

Published by: [American Oriental Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/599159>

Accessed: 01/03/2013 21:04

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at  
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



American Oriental Society is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the American Oriental Society*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

# KĀŞĠARĪ ON THE BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS OF THE TURKS

ROBERT DANKOFF

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Although Kāşġarġ's *Dġwān Luġāl at-Turk* (c. 1075) has been used recently by scholars for comparative purposes, there has been no systematic treatment of materials bearing on superstitions and religious beliefs since Brockelmann's study, fifty years ago.

Islamization of the "ghazi" variety is reflected in the oral culture; also, certain terms have taken on an Islamic content, certain others, however, retain a "pre-Islamic" coloring (I). Pre-Islamic notions survive most vividly in the categories of festivals, sacrifices, and feasts (II); the conceptions of fortune (III), blessedness (IV), and cursedness (V); the various classes of ghosts and spirits (VI), demons and evil eye (VII); the functions of diviners (VIII), who should not be called "shamans" in the strict definition of that term (Excursus); and beliefs in a variety of marvelous minerals, plants, and animals (IX).

THE *Dġwān Luġāl at-Turk* IS A MINE OF INFORMATION on the folk beliefs of the Turks, at a period when Turkic dynasties were politically dominant in the Muslim world, but when Islam had only begun to penetrate the lives of the tribesmen who were their followers and support. The author, Maġmūd Kāşġarġ, was a scion of the Qarakhanid dynasty. He travelled among the Turkic peoples, "throughout their cities and their steppes, learning their dialects and their verses" (3,3),<sup>1</sup> and wrote his *Dġwān* on the model of Arabic lexicons. Since it is dedicated to the caliph al-Muqtadġ (1075-1094), its purpose was perhaps to explain to the Abbasid court the language and customs of their Selġuk overlords. The information contained in the *Dġwān*, however, mainly concerns those nomadic and sedentarized Turkic tribes who were subject to the Qarakhanid dynasty, then ruling in Transoxania and Central Asia.

There has been no systematic study of materials in the *Dġwān* bearing on superstitions and religious beliefs since Brockelmann's "Volkskundliches aus Altturkestan."<sup>2</sup> In this pioneering article, Brockelmann gathered much of the relevant data, but

stressed the wrong things. He ignored *qut* ("Fortune"), for example, in his discussion of supernatural beliefs. Instead—thinking, perhaps, of the pre-Islamic Arabs—he concentrated on *ażun* and *öġlġg* ("world" and "time"), words which serve, in the rather sophisticated verses, as conceits for "Fate".

Alessio Bombaci remedied this in his discussion of *qut*,<sup>3</sup> but did not distinguish adequately between the two earliest Islamic Turkic monuments—the *Dġwān*, and *Qutaġġu Bilig* (written 1069). In the former *qut* is by no means an "ambivalent notion"<sup>4</sup> as it is in the latter, where it corresponds to Arabic *dawlah*. Rather, the word *qut* in the *Dġwān* carries only its old positive connotations (see III below).

Jean-Paul Roux must be credited for showing the poverty of material in pre-Mongol texts, including the *Dġwān*, that can be interpreted as "shamanic"<sup>5</sup> (see VIII below). With regard to the level of Islamization attained by the Turks in Kāşġarġ's time, Robert Devereux's essay<sup>6</sup> drew

<sup>1</sup> References to the *Dġwān* give page and line number of the phototypical edition of the unique manuscript (Ankara, 1941). On the author's life, see O. Pritsak, "Mahmud Kāşġarġ kimdir?," *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 10 (1951-53), 243-246. Pritsak also elucidated the history of the Qarakhanids; his findings are summarized by Bosworth in the new Encyclopedia of Islam, s.v. "İlek-khānids."

<sup>2</sup> *Asia Major* II (1925), 110-124.

<sup>3</sup> "Qutluġ Bolsun!" (part 2), *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher* 38 (1966), 13-43.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> "Le nom du chaman dans les textes turco-mongols," *Anthropos* 53 (1958), 133-142: "Éléments chamaniques dans les textes pré-mongols," *Anthropos* 53 (1958), 441-456.

<sup>6</sup> "Al-Kāşġarġ and Early Turkish Islam," *The Muslim World*, 1959, 133-138. Devereux gauges the extent of Islamic penetration as evidenced by the Hadiths extolling the Turks, the Japhetic genealogy, the figure of

attention to the level reached by Kāšgarī himself, but fell short when describing the level reached by the masses of Turkic converts (see I below).

It must be kept in mind that the *Dīwān* is first of all a lexicon, and that the verses, proverbs, sentences and bits of information that Kāšgarī gives are all in illustration of lexical items. Our investigation, therefore, will mainly revolve around the interpretation of words, and will pay close attention to their Arabic equivalents.

### I. ISLAMIZATION

In the third quarter of the eleventh century Islam had only begun to take on importance in the lives of the majority of Turks. For the common people, if not for the ruling dynasties, two aspects of Islam were influential.

The first was a pious asceticism of the Sufi variety.<sup>7</sup> This is little evidenced in the *Dīwān*. Kāšgarī mentions only one figure, a certain Qulbāq, whom he describes as a Turkic ascete (zāhid) who used to frequent the mountains of Balāsāgūn (239,3): "They say that he used to write with his hand on hard black stone: *tāyri quli qulbāq*, meaning "God's slave Qulbāq," and the writing would show forth on it in white; and the same on white stone, where the writing would show forth in black; traces of it are found to this day." Qulbāq, it seems, practiced the Sufi custom of rolling in the dust, and achieved some notoriety for this as well. In a verse (478,5) the poet taunts his former partner, who has stolen a slave-boy of his named Turumtāy, by saying (among other things): *qulbāq uđu yuwulma*, "Don't roll after Qulbāq!"

The second aspect of Islam that was influential was the "ghazi" spirit, which drove its more warlike converts to emulate the early Arab conquerors, inspired by the teachings of Muḥammad. This spirit was playing an important role among the contemporary Turkmen tribes in the west.<sup>8</sup> It is also evidenced in the *Dīwān*.

Dhū-l Qarnayn, etc. On the last point, see now Robert Dankoff, "The Alexander Romance in the *Dīwān* Lughāt at-Turk," *Humaniora Islamica* I (1973).

<sup>7</sup> See the classic study by Fuad Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Matusavvîflar* (second edition, Ankara 1966).

<sup>8</sup> See P. Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1966), p. 18ff.; I. Mëlikoff, *La Geste de Melik Dānişmend* (2 vols., Paris, 1960), Vol. I, p. 48ff.

Kāšgarī relates (545,14-546,6) how the Ghāzi, Arslān Tegīn, with an army of 40,000 Muslims defeated the infidel Yabāqu tribe, who were 700,000 strong. Interestingly, he puts the story in the mouth of one of the defeated soldiers: "When the drums began to beat and the trumpets began to blow, we saw just ahead a green mountain blocking the horizon. In it were gates, too numerous to count, each of them wide open and shooting at us sparks from fires. We were bewildered on account of this, and so you defeated us." This is a typical "ghazi" legend; Kāšgarī piously ascribes the miracle to the Prophet.

One of the verse cycles in the *Dīwān* describes a campaign against the infidel (Buddhist) Uighurs. The following verse is especially revealing (173,8):

*kālqizlāyü aqtimiz* "We came down on them like a flood

*kāndlār üzä äqtimiz* We went out upon their cities  
*furxan äwin yiqtimiz* We tore down the idol temples  
*burxan üzä siëtimiz* We shit upon the idols' heads."

Kāšgarī serenely remarks on this that "it is customary for the Muslims, when they capture a country of infidels, to defecate on the heads of their idols in order to profane them."

The word for "idol"—*burxān* (~ *furxan*; cf. 219,10)—comes of course from the word for Buddha (ED, 360).<sup>9</sup> Another word that is known to be of Buddhist provenance is *toyin* (519,7; ED, 569), defined as "priest of the Infidels" (al-'ilj min ummat al-kufr). "He is like the 'Ālim or Mufti among us," Kāšgarī remarks; "he is always found with his idols, and reading books and the laws of the infidels (aḥkām al-kafarah)—we take refuge from him with God most high!" Elsewhere (479,13) we find the following characteristic example sentences: *qul tāyrikä yükündi*, "The slave (worshipper) bowed down to God;" *toyin burxanqa yükündi*, "The heathen ('ilj) bowed down to the idol."

The animosity toward Buddhism illustrated here is in striking contrast to Kāšgarī's attitude toward the "national" customs and beliefs associated with the diviners (see VIII below).

Words like *burxān* and *toyin* were too closely associated with rival religions to acquire an Islamic significance. The same is true of *suburğān* (257,11; ED, 792), "tombs of the Infidels" (an-

<sup>9</sup> References cited "ED" are to Sir Gerard Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish* (Oxford, 1972).

nāwūs wa-maqābir al-kafarah), and *baṣaq* (207,12; ED, 293), "Christian fast"—i.e. Lent.<sup>10</sup>

Several words were able to take on an Islamic coloring, at least in certain contexts or in certain dialects. *Nōm* (503,10; ED, 777), the only general word in the *Diwān* for "religion" (al-milal kulluhā), is labelled "dialect of the Šīn's" (i.e. Kāšgar and points east, cf. 228,7); but the expression *tāyri nōmi* is translated "God's Religion" (šarī'at allāh wa-dīnuhu), i.e. Islam. *Biti* (540,16), which is a dialect form of *bitig*, "book," means "a revealed Book" (al-kitāb min al-kutub al-munzalah min as-samā'). At 410,11 Kāšgarī says that *yalāwāč* means specifically a messenger of God (i.e. a Prophet) and is opposed to the Uighur term *yalāwar* which is confined to a messenger of a king. (The Oğuz form *yalāwač* is found at 45,16 and 561,9 translated simply "messenger".) The term *īdi* (56,7), meaning "master, lord" (sayyid, mawlā, rabb), can refer to God (allāh ta'ālā). *Ekindi* (82,10) originally a doublette of *ekinč* meaning "second," has already taken on the specialized sense of "the time of the afternoon prayer" (waqt šalāt al-ʿaṣr).

A special case is the word *muyān* (520,14; ED, 386), "religious recompense" (aṭ-ṭawāb). According to Karl Menges, this "is probably one of those rare Sanskrit loan words [Skr. *punja*, Uig. *bujan*] which became so deeply rooted that it was no longer felt to be alien and could not be eradicated when Islam gained access to Eastern Türkistan; . . . the two derivatives which Kāšgarī quotes are in some sense proof of its complete adoption by Turkic: *mujan-čy-lyq*, 'reconciliation', and *mujan-lyq*, 'a watering station on the road'. This true loan word firmly withstood the onslaught of Arabic."<sup>11</sup>

I must disagree here with Menges' judgement. To be sure, *muyān* and its derivatives have retained a religious connotation, but there is no indication by Kāšgarī that this connotation is specifically an Islamic one. As for *muyančiliq*, I would agree with Bombaci's suggestion that there is a contamination from Persian *miyān*.<sup>12</sup> Outside of the *Diwān* and *Qutaḍḡu Bilig*<sup>13</sup> the

word hardly "withstood the onslaught of Arabic." *Muyān* was replaced universally by the Arabic *ṭawāb*;<sup>14</sup> *muyānliq* by such words as Osm. *sebil* or *vakiṭ* (Ar. *sabil*, *waqf*). It thus followed the fate of *nōm* (replaced by Ar. *dīn*), *biti* (Ar. *kitāb*), and *yalāwač* (P. *Peygamber*), etc.

Some words which did withstand the onslaught of Arabic in many Turkic dialects are *učmāq*, "paradise" (72,5) and *tamu*, "hell" (548,12),<sup>15</sup> and *tāyri*, "God" (608,17; cf. 51,12 *uğan tāyri*, "God Almighty" [allāh al-qādir], and *tāyri nōmi*, above). On the last Kāšgarī has the following remark (609,5): "The Infidels—may God destroy them!—call the sky *tāyri*; also anything that is imposing (ʿazuma) in their eyes they call *tāyri*, such as a great mountain or tree, and they bow down to such things . . ." This is revealing for itself<sup>16</sup> and also for Kāšgarī's contemptuous attitude toward the primitive theological conceptions of the non-Muslim Turks.

## II. FESTIVALS, SACRIFICES, AND FEASTS

At this point we begin to touch on beliefs and customs that show little or no influence of "foreign" religions.

The word defined as "festival" (al-ʿid) is *bayram* (522,9), labelled Oğuz dialect.<sup>17</sup> Of it Kāšgarī remarks: "I consider it to derive from the popular

---

*Kutadgu Bilig I: Metin* (Istanbul, 1947), lines 3225, 3262, 3319, 3499, 5162, 5292, 5296, 5733, 5984, 6287. *Muyanliq* is also found, but in the sense of "inn, lodging" (line 489).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. W. Radloff, *Versuch eines Wörterbuches der Türk Dialecte*, 4 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1893-1911), Vol. IV, "Alphabetisches Verzeichniss," p. 36, s.v. The latest trace of *muyan* appears to be in the fourteenth century Arabic-Turkic lexicon of Ibn Muḥannā (A. Battal, *İbnü-Mühennâ Lûgati*, Istanbul, 1936); but in the Ms. that served as basis for Melioranski's edition, the word corresponding to *ṭawāb* is *algış* (P. Melioranski, *Arab Filolog o Turetskom Yazıke*, St. Petersburg, 1900, p. 44).

<sup>15</sup> On *učmāq* and *tamu* see now H. W. Brands, *Studien zum Wortbestand der Türksprachen* . . . (Leiden, 1973), p. 51-52.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. A. Z. V. Togan, *Ibn Fadlān's Reisebericht* (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, XXIV.3, Leipzig, 1939), pp. 26, 136; A. v. Rohr-Sauer, *Des Abū Dulaf Bericht über seine Reise nach Turkestan, China und Indien* . . . (Bonn, 1939), p. 22.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. O. Turan, "Bayram" in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 16. cüz (Istanbul, 1961).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Henning in *BSOS* 8 (1936), p. 587-8.

<sup>11</sup> K. H. Menges, *The Turkic Languages and Peoples: An Introduction to Turkic Studies* (Ural-Altaische Bibliothek 15: Wiesbaden, 1968), p. 166-7.

<sup>12</sup> Bombaci, *op. cit.*, p. 24, n. 53.

<sup>13</sup> In *Qutaḍḡu Bilig* the word *muyan* is found always in connection with the ascete Oḡurmiš, See R. R. Arat,

term (qawl an-nās) *baḍram*, meaning 'pleasure,' since a festival day is a day of pleasure. Before Islam (fi-l-jāhiliyyah) there were no festival days at all, that there should have been a word for them; if there had been, then all of the Turks should have known it (in this meaning), but the only ones who do are (those who) change *ḍ* to *y* according to their dialect (i.e., Oğuz)."

Here "festival day" means the two great festivals of the Islamic calendar, still called *bayram* among the descendants of Oğuz. Outside of the Oğuz usage the word retained its pagan association with the hunt and with other "secular" (in Islamic terms) events in the life of the people. An example is the verse at 136,2:

*yigillārig iṣlatu* Let us put the youngsters to work  
*yigāḥ yemiṣ irḡatu* Shaking fruit from the trees  
*qulān kāyik awlatu* Hunting wild ass and other beasts  
*baḍram qillip awnatim* While we enjoy the holiday.

Kāšgarī is surely mistaken when he says the Turks had no festivals or holidays before Islam.<sup>18</sup> He himself mentions festivals (a'yād) in the rather mysterious notice of *kānč liyu* (633,8): "a table that is set up during festivals and the feasts of kings (al-a'yād wa-walā'im al-mulūk), for booty; it is like a minaret, thirty cubits straight up." These are surely not the Muslim festivals, but rather the great pagan feast days of the Turks, characterized by games and display of booty (as illustrated, for example, in *Dede Qorqut*). The booty probably served as prizes; and the suggestion has been made (ED, 727) that *kānč* here is simply the Persian *ganj* "treasure".

This notice would seem to have no religious reference at all. *Liyu*, however, must be the same word (or derive from the same word) as *lev*, found in Uighur texts as one of the words for a sacrificial offering.<sup>19</sup> Turkic *kānč* (633,7) means "baby;

young of an animal," and in this compound, therefore, could originally have meant the young animal of a sacrifice. The word *liyu*, curiously, is found as a main entry (550,5) translated: "mud which turns into hard clay when it dries." The compound *kānč liyu*, then, taken with the meanings of the words separately, is reminiscent of the Kitan custom during festivals and anniversaries of imperial deaths: "The earth was . . . built up into a platform more than ten feet high. On it a large plate was placed for offering sacrifice; wine and food were spread out on it and burned. According to national custom, this was called the Burning Festival."<sup>20</sup>

The only word in the *Dīwān* unequivocally associated with sacrifice is *yagiš* (448,17): "name of the sacrificial beast which the heathens used to slaughter for their idols because of a vow that fell due or as an offering (ism al-ʿatīrah allatī kāna yaḍbaḥu ahl al-jāhiliyyah li-aṣnāmihim li-naḍrin waqaʿa lahum aw-taqarrubin).

The Arabic word for sacrificial beast (ʿatīrah) is found again at 510,1 where mention is made of the Magians who sacrifice ʿatāʾir at the annual festival at Baykand near Bukhara, where they lament the death of Siyavush.<sup>21</sup>

Clausen (ED, 908) derives *yagiš* from *yaḡ-*, "to pour down (rain, etc.)," and therefore translates it "libation." Indeed, of the Magian ʿatāʾir Kāšgarī remarks, "They pour their blood on his blood"—i.e. they pour the blood of the sacrificial beasts over the blood of Siyavush. *Yagiš*, however, is clearly the name of the offering itself, not its blood. Rachmati Arat translated it "Schlachtopfer," in opposition to *sačig* "Streuopfer," *tökük* "Libationen," and *aš, liv - lāv, turma*, "Opfer-speise"—all of these terms found in Uighur texts.<sup>22</sup> *Yagiš* therefore is perhaps to be connected rather with the roots *yaq-, yaḡu-*, "to draw near" (cf. ED, 898), with the same semantic complex as Hebrew and Arabic *qurbān, taqarrub*.

Kāšgarī mentions the names of four kinds of feast. Two of these may perhaps relate to seasonal festivals. One is *sōḡdič* (229,1), a circulating (?)

<sup>18</sup> See the works cited in the previous two notes. According to Abū Dulaf (Rohr-Sauer, *loc. cit.*) the Kirgiz had three yearly festivals; this is paralleled by Chinese notices on the Hiung-nu and the T'u-kue.

<sup>19</sup> See Rachmati [Arat], "Türkische Turfan-Texte VII," *APAW*, 1937, p. 67. In his sinological notes to this study Wolfram Eberhard states (*ibid.*, p. 95): "Die chinesische Entsprechung für *liv* ist mir unbekannt." Clauson (ED, 763-4) suggests Ch. *li* "a grain" as the etymon for *lev*, and a different Ch. etymon for *liyu*. In *Qutaḡḡu Bilig*, line 2549f., we find the combination *lev aš tergi* for the table of food brought out for visitors to the court; line 2553: two things add to the fame of Begs, their banner in the courtyard, and their *lev* in the place of honor.

<sup>20</sup> K. A. Wittfogel and Fêng Chia-Shêng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao (907-1125)* (New York, 1949), p. 284. (In Kāšgarī's notice on *kānč liyu* it must also be contemplated whether the phrase "for booty"—*li-nahb*—may not be in error for *li-t-taqarrub*, or the like).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. R. N. Frye, *The History of Bukhara . . . by Narshakhi* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), pp. 16-17, 23.

<sup>22</sup> See note 19 above.



feast in winter (diyāfah tadūru bayn al-qawm fi š-šitā' 'alā t-tartīb). The other is *kāstām* (244,1), a night drinking party for uninvited guests (diyāfah yattaxiḍuhā r-rajul li-šurbin atawhu laylan min gayr ma'dubah). The second one is called *šanbūy* in Kānčāk dialect (550,14 diyāfah yuttaxaḍu laylan li-šurbin ḥaḍarū min da'wah uxrā).

The other two are intimately related to the family crises of marriage and death. The wedding feast is called *kūdān* (203,17 al-walimah).<sup>23</sup> The funeral feast is known as *yōğ basan* (201,7); the two words of this compound are defined separately as follows. *Basan*<sup>24</sup> is the food prepared for the dead after his burial (201,6 ta'ām yuttaxaḍu li-l-mayyit ba'da mā dafanūhu), whereas *yōğ* is the food prepared for his relatives either three or seven days after the burial (506,9 ta'ām yuttaxaḍu li-qawm raja'ū min dafn al-mayyit ilā ṭalāṭat ayyām aw sab'ah). We also find the phrase: *ol ölügkə yōğlādi* (579,7), translated, "He prepared a feast for the dead" (ittaxaḍa da'watan li-l-mayyit). "This," Kāšgarī says, "is a custom of the Turks."<sup>25</sup>

### III. FORTUNE: QUT

Over and above any specific religious notion is a generalized belief in Fortune (dawlah, jadd, baxt, yumn),<sup>26</sup> expressed by the word *qut* (161,10) and its pair *qiw* (167,7). That is to say, good fortune or luck. Evil fortune ("fate") is expressed by

<sup>23</sup> On marriage customs see Robert Dankoff, "Kāšgarī on the Tribal and Kinship Organization of the Turks," *Archivum Ottomanicum* IV (1972), section IV.

<sup>24</sup> Vocalization uncertain; vocalized *bāsān* by Togan, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Togan, *op. cit.*, excursus to no. 31; J-P. Roux, *La Mort chez les peuples altaïques anciens et médiévaux* (Paris, 1963), p. 147ff.; L. Bazin, "Formules propitiatoires et genres oraux traditionnels: étude d'une famille de mots turco-mongole," *Turcica* I (1969), pp. 20-22; Menges, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88; F. Köprülü, *Edebiyat Araştırmaları* (Ankara, 1966), p. 87ff.; W. Radloff, *Aus Sibirien*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1893), Vol. I, pp. 379, 449, 487; K. Menges, "Volkskundliche Texte aus Ost-Türkistan," *SPAW*, 1933, lines I.33, II.7-9, III.30, V.15, Va.8,28; G. P. Snesev, "Remnants of Pre-Islamic Beliefs and Rituals among the Khorezm Uzbeks," Part V, *Soviet Anthropology and Archeology* 11 (Winter 1972-73), p. 233-4.

<sup>26</sup> Bombaci, *op. cit.*, p. 26 includes ṭālī' among the Arabic equivalents of *qut*; I do not find this in the *Diwān* as an equivalent of *qut*.

*ažun*, "world" (51,6 *ad-dunyā*—Čigil dialect), or *ödläg*, "time" (64,5 *az-zamān*).<sup>27</sup>

In the two verses where we find *qut qiw* as a paired expression, Fortune is explicitly stated to be a gift of God.

(161,11):

*qut qiwig bersä iğim qūliğa  
küñdä işi yüksäbän yōqār ağār*

"When God gives Fortune to His slave, his status (amr) daily rises." (152,9):

*uluğ täğri ağırladı  
anin qut qiw tozi toğdı*

"God must high graced him with victory, and thus the dust of Fortune rose on high."

Even in these verses *qut* is a very worldly conception, equivalent to social status or victory in battle. Elsewhere we find the pair *nāğ qut* (verse at 253,13), meaning "worldly fortune" (*māl wa-jadd*). In two other verses *qut* is, by extention, the beloved one whose loss the poet bewails. (355,10):

*sürdi menig qulumni  
qāz taqi qordāyimni*

"He drove away my Fortune, my goose and my swan"—i.e. my beloved slave-boy Turumtāy. (139,12):

*yiglap udu artadim  
bağrim bašin qartadim  
qaçmiş qutuğ irtadim . . .*

"I cried after my beloved until I dissolved; I broke open the wound of my liver which had healed; I followed the trace of Fortune which had fled . . ."<sup>28</sup>

*Qut* is something that a person finds (*nāğ qut bulup* in the verse at 253,13; *qut buldi* as equivalent to *qutuldi* in the sense of finding release from pain at giving birth, 329,10). It is the luck that attaches to a person and can just as easily leave him (*anig quti uçdi*, "His luck flew away," 92,5; *anig quti uđindi*, "His luck was extinguished," 109,6). But it is not altogether capricious. It comes to those who honor guests (proverb at 59,3: *ümā kalsā qut kälir*, "The guest brings good luck" [jadd, yumn]; cf. verse at 55,2 = 193,4). It also comes to those who honor their elders (proverb at 154,4: *uluğni uluğläsa qut bulür*). It is associated with

<sup>27</sup> For discussion and examples see Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 118-119.

<sup>28</sup> Bombaci, *op. cit.*, p. 27 translates: "I trod in the steps of the flying Fortune," and takes this as an example of the "personification" of Fortune.

wisdom (proverb at 215,12: *qut bālgüsü bilig*) and with virtue (proverb at 381,7: *ārdāmsızdān qut çārtılūr*, "Fortune flees from the man without virtue").

"Fortune rains double on a lucky man" (proverb at 470,14: *qutluğqa qoşa yağār*). But "when a luckless man falls in the well it rains sand" (proverb at 230,9: *qutsuz quduğqa kirsā qum yağār*).

#### IV. BLESSEDNESS AND GOOD OMENS

The word *qutluğ*, "fortunate," means, by extension, "blessed" (*mubārak*), as when it is used in two verses to modify Summer (54,3; 233,4). The notion is expressed in Oğuz dialect by *uğur* (39,3 *xayr*, *barakah*), used only in the prayer-greeting to travellers: *yōl uğur bolsun*.

Of a more specifically religious nature is the word *iđuq* (45,3), defined as "anything blessed" (*kull šay' mubārak*). On the origin of this word Kāšgarī states: "Any animal that has been set free (*yusayyabu*) is called *iđuq*. One does not burden its back, nor milk its udder, nor shear its wool, because of a vow (*nađr*) taken by its owner." It is unclear whether this is the same kind of vow mentioned in connection with *yağıš* (see II above). In some modern Turkic languages a form of the word *iđuq*<sup>29</sup> is used for the horse dedicated for sacrifice, or else the domestic animal to which is transmitted a disease and which is then consecrated to the demons.<sup>30</sup> For "animal set free" Kāšgarī also gives *iđma yilqi* (77,10) and *iđinču yilqi* (79,11). We also find the phrase *iđuq tāj* (45,5), meaning "a mountain that is inaccessible and long" (*jabal māni' ʔawil*).

The use of an animal's shoulder-blade to predict the future might be mentioned in this connection. It is attested in the *Dīwān* only frozen in a proverb, and with a political reference (453,13): *yarın bulğansa el bulğānūr*, "If the shoulder-blade is impaired, the state will suffer impairment" (*iđā tašawwaša l-wilāyah* [the Arabic is defective]).<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Radloff, *Versuch* . . . , Vol. I, columns 1359, 1397, 1634; and ED, 46.

<sup>30</sup> See Radloff, *Aus Sibirien*, Vol. I, p. 282; A. Friedrich and G. Buddruss, *Schamanengeschichten aus Sibirien* (München, 1955), Index, s.v. *ytyk*; J.-P. Roux, *Faune et flore sacrées dans les sociétés altaïques* (Paris, 1966), p. 171ff.; D. Zélénine, *Le culte des idoles en Sibérie* (tr. G. Welter, Paris, 1952), p. 194ff.

<sup>31</sup> On *yarın~yağrın* see W. Bang, "Über die türkischen

Certain specific things are considered blessed and are taken as good omens when they appear. Such, for example, are the physical concomitants of birth. The amniotic sac is called *qāp* (508,2), defined as "the membrane in which the foetus is enclosed in the womb." A child bearing traces of this membrane is called *qāpliğ oğul* and is reckoned as blessed (*mubārak*).<sup>32</sup> The placenta or afterbirth is known as *umāy*, defined as follows (74,5): "a thing which emerges from the womb after a woman gives birth; it is like a small box (*ka-l-ḥuqqah*) and is said to be the companion (*šāhib*) of the child in the womb. . . . Women draw a good omen from it (*yatafa' alna bi-ḡālika*)." They also pray to it for fertility, as we gather from the accompanying proverb: *umāyqa tapinsa oğul bulūr*, "One who worships Umāy will get a child."<sup>33</sup>

Other things which Kāšgarī mentions as "good omens" are the color orange, and the number nine (498,11 f.),<sup>34</sup> also a halo around the moon, which augurs rain (134,2). The Turks also draw an omen (*yatafa'alūna*) from each year in the twelve-year cycle, of which Kāšgarī gives four examples (175,1 f.).<sup>35</sup>

Namen einiger Grosskatzen," *Keleti-Szemle* XVII (1917), p. 142; ED, 970. On scapulomancy among the Altaic peoples see Roux, *Faune et flore* . . . , pp. 154-159.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. definition of "caul" in *The American College Dictionary*: "a part of the amnion sometimes covering the head of a child at birth, superstitiously supposed to bring good luck and to be an infallible preservative against drowning."

<sup>33</sup> On this Placenta Goddess see Roux, *La Mort* . . . , p. 87; Snesarev, *op. cit.*, Part IV (vol. 10, Winter, 1971-72), p. 270ff.; A. İnan, *Makaleler ve İncelemeler* (Ankara 1968), pp. 397-9, 464-5. In Osm. the afterbirth is called *son* (literally, "end") or, more commonly, *eş* (literally, "companion"); cf. O. Acipayamlı, *Türkiye'de doğumla ilgili âdet ve inanmaların etnolojik etüdü* (Erzurum, 1961), p. 49f.

<sup>34</sup> Comparative materials on the number nine are collected by G. Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen* (Akademie der Wissenschaft und der Literatur: Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission), Vol. II (Band XIX, 1965), heading no. 976.

<sup>35</sup> Comparative materials are gathered in O. Turan, *Oniki Hayvanlı Türk Takvimi* (Istanbul, 1941), pp. 89-96. For some non-Turkic Central Asian examples, see H. Lüders, "Zur Geschichte des ostasiatischen Tierkreises," *SPAW*, 1933, p. 999; H. W. Bailey, "Hvatanica," *BSOS* 8 (1937), p. 924ff.

The term for "good omen" is *ād* (52,11 fa'l jay-yid).<sup>36</sup> The example given is: *iglig tutzuḡi ād bolūr*, "The testament of a sick man is a good omen for him." This appears to be a set phrase with which one requests a dying man to make his will.

## V. EVIL OMENS AND CURSEDNESS

Kāšgarī mentions only two things from which the Turks draw an evil omen (*yataṭayyarūna bihi*). One is a vulture that shrieks in a man's face—it is a sign that the man will die (121,9). The other is a red cloud at sunrise; at sunset, on the other hand, it is a lucky sign (proverb, 131,2):<sup>37</sup>

*tūnlā bulit örtānsā*  
*āwliḡ uri kāldürmišcā bolūr*  
*taḡda bulit örtānsā*  
*āwkā yaḡi kirmišcā bolūr*

"If the clouds are red in the evening, it is as if a woman gave birth to a son; if in the morning, it is as if an enemy entered the house."

"Cursing"—*qarḡiṣ* (232,2 mal'ūn, la'nah)—has its common source in God (571,7 *tāḡri ani qarḡādi*), and its common object in the Devil or *yāk* (515,5 aš-šaytān; 384,8 *yāk qarḡaldi*; 433,5 *yākni qarḡat-ti*). In the *Diwān* the Devil is a rather playful imp. He causes yawning (137,8 *yāk ani āsnātti*),<sup>38</sup> and leads astray with honey and silk (verse at 513,7).

## VI. GHOSTS AND SPIRITS

There is a class of goblins, including "a ghoul that strikes one in a deserted place," called *oḡūṣin* (84,9; ED, 174), and two types of "nightmare" (*al-jāṭūm*), called *abāci* and *bürt* (80, 14; 172,3). The first is only a bogey; to frighten a child you say: *abāci kāldi*, "Abāci has come." The second

is more formidable; you say: *ani бүрт basdı*, "The nightmare pressed upon him" (268,16).<sup>39</sup>

"A well-known belief among the Turks" (547,2) is that the spirits of the dead gather one night each year, go into the settlements (*amšār*) where they had passed their lives, and visit their families (*tazūru ahālīhā*). The droning or rustling sound (*dawī*) which they make is called *tiki* (*tegi*?), and "whoever meets up with this sound at night dies."

*Tiki* is simply onomatopoeic; cf. *tikilādi nāḡ*, "It made a light rustling sound" (587,11 *dawīya wa-ḥaffa*); *at ādāqi tiktādi*, "The horse's hoof made a rustling sound" (566,17 *dawīya*). Kāšgarī, however, attempts to connect the word etymologically with the verbal root *tāḡ-*, "to reach, attain": "The word has *i* after the *t*, but in my opinion *a* would be better, since you say of a woman who comes to visit her family after she has been given to her husband: *tāḡdi kāldi*, meaning 'She came visiting' (*jā'at zā'iratan*)."

Another "well-known belief" (544,14) is that "when two groups do battle, the jinn who dwell in their respective lands fight each other beforehand, out of loyalty (*ta'aṣṣuban*) to the human rulers of their two lands. Whichever of them is victorious, victory comes to the ruler of that one's land on the morrow; but whichever of them is defeated during the night, defeat comes to the king in whose land that party of the jinn dwell. The armies of the Turks hide on the eve of battle (? *laylat al-ma'ād*), keeping to their tents, in order to protect themselves from the arrows of the jinn." This party (*ḥizb*) of jinn is called *ciwi*.

*Ciwi* is also simply onomatopoeic for the sound of the jinn fighting; cf. *ciwila-* (587, 5), which expresses the rumbling or sizzling (*hadr*, *aziz*) of a pot on the fire.<sup>40</sup> The *ciwi* are an example of the Phantom Host, well-known in world folklore.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> The connection of *ādḡū*, "good" (originally "well omened, auspicious"?), with this word is still transparent in the Turkic divination texts, *Irq Bitig* (V. Thomsen, "Dr. M. A. Stein's Manuscripts in Turkish 'Runic' Script from Miran and Tun-Huang," JRAS, 1912, 181-227) and "Türkische Turfan-Texte I" (*SPAW*, 1929, 241-268) = R. R. Arat, *Eski Türk Şiiri* (Ankara 1965), pp. 277-305.

<sup>37</sup> As in the English ditty, "Red at night, sailors delight, red in the morning, sailors take warning."

<sup>38</sup> Cf. the Hadith cited by al-Ghazālī, "Sneezing is from God, and yawning is from the devil" (J. A. Williams, *Themes of Islamic Civilization*, U. of Calif. Press, 1971, p. 24).

<sup>39</sup> Perhaps to be connected with Krg. *bürt* ~ *mürt*, "sudden death." The mysterious *k.t.y bürt* at 172,3 (cf. ED, 701) is perhaps to be connected with *tiki*, see *infra* (metathesis? misspelling?).

<sup>40</sup> Clauson however (ED, 394) suggests an etymological connection between *ciwi* and Ir. *daeva*, "demon."

<sup>41</sup> On the Phantom Host see T. H. Gaster, *Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament* (New York, 1969), p. 204. The Bulghar king explained the Aurora noises to Ibn Faḡlān as a battle between believing and unbelieving jinn (Togan, *op. cit.*, p. 52). Cf. Schiltberger's report of a battle between sea adders and forest adders presaging a victory of the king of Samsun (*The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger* . . ., London, 1879, p. 13).



A semantic connection between “guest” and “ghost” (a connection only hinted at in the two English words) is found in Kāšġarī’s dictionary. *Öz qonuqi* (35,5), which literally means “the soul’s guest,” is defined as follows: “Name of the animate part of the body; it is said to be the Spirit” (ism mā yaxtaliju min al-jasad wa-yuqālu hiya r-rūh). A reflection of this is perhaps to be seen in the verbal stem *özāl-* (107,8), in the phrase *iglig özäldi*, translated, “The sick man had difficulty giving up the ghost, as though he were too strong for death to be decreed against him” (‘asura ‘alā l-marīd naz’ ar-rūh ka-annahulā yuqāda ‘alayhi min aš-šiddah). A word meaning “guest, traveller” (musāfir) is *yelgin* (460,12 Türk dialect) ~ *elgin* (26,3 Oguz/Qifčāq dialect); it is found in a verse where the poet is describing the passing phantom of his beloved (ṭurūq ṭayf ḥabībihi). (479,16):

<i>yüknüp maṇa imlādi</i>	He greeted me with a bow and a humble gesture
<i>közüm yāšin yamladi</i>	He wiped away the tear-speck of my eye
<i>bağrim bāšin āmlādi</i>	He treated the wound of my liver
<i>elgin bolup ol kăčār</i>	Then passed me by as a traveller

## VII. DEMONIC POSSESSION AND EVIL EYE

The Arabic word “sa’fah” appears fourteen times in the *Dīwān* (all cited below) with the meaning “demonic possession” or “diabolic stroke.” The Arabic lexicographers, however, give “sa’fah” as a type of ulcer that erupts on the heads of children; the word meaning “possession” is a metathesis of this: “saf’ah.”

The confusion between the two words is much older than Kāšġarī, however; it can in fact be traced almost as far back as the Prophet.

The *Lisān al-‘Arab*, s.v. “saf’ah,” gives the following Hadith concerning Umm Salamah: “The Prophet came to her when she had with her a girl who had a saf’ah and he said, ‘Use spells for her, for the evil eye has looked upon her’ (fihā nazraḥ fa-starqū lahā),<sup>42</sup> meaning that she had a sign (‘alāmah) from the Devil.”

Now we find virtually the same Hadith s.v. “sa’fah”: “He saw a girl in the house of Umm

Salamah who had a sa’fah—with sukūn over the ‘ayn; it is said to be ulcers that appear on the head of a child. Ibn al-Athīr said, ‘Thus was it transmitted by al-Ḥarbī, with the ‘ayn before the fā’, but as I memorized it (al-mahfūz), it is just the contrary.’”

Returning to the *Dīwān*: the common source of a sa’fah is *yēl*, “a demon” (507, 3 al-jinn; the primary meaning of *yēl* is “wind”). Examples: *ārni yēl toqīdi* (562,14), “The man was struck with a sa’fah from the jinn”; *oġlāniġ yēl qapdi* (265,10), “The child was struck with a sa’fah from the jinn”; *oġlān yel qapindi* (344,7), “The child was struck with a sa’fah”; *ār yelpindi* (507,3), “The man was struck with a sa’fah from the jinn”; *oġlān yelpindi* (489,4), “The child was seized by a sa’fah”; *ār yelpirdi* (483,3), “The man turned right and left as though he were struck with a sa’fah from the jinn.”

The demonic stroke itself is *yelpik* (464,10 as-sa’fah min al-jinn). Example: *ārka yelpik tāgdi*, “The man was struck with a sa’fah.”<sup>43</sup> A synonym is *tutuġ* (187,11 al-ixḍ wahwa s-sa’fah min al-jinn). Compare *tutuġluġ yēr* (248,9), “a land haunted by jinn who injure anyone who passes through.” One possessed by a demon or familiar spirit is called *ēšlig* (from *ēš*, “companion”; 35, left margin, *allaqī ma’ahu tābi’ah min al-jinn*).

The trace (aṭar; ED, 581, “symptoms”) of a sa’fah is *qovuč* (516,13) ~ *qovuz* (516,16, Oguz dialect). Kāšġarī informs us that one who has been struck with it is treated as follows: “You dash cold water in his face, then say *qovuč qovuč*, and afterwards fumigate him with rue and aloes. I think it comes from their expression *qač qač*, meaning ‘Run, flee, O jinni!’” There is a modern corroboration to the use of the phrase *qač qač* in driving out the jinn;<sup>44</sup> the etymon for *qovuč*, however, must be *qov-*, “to drive out,” otherwise not attested in the *Dīwān*, but the normal Oguz counterpart of *qow-* (271,17) ~ *qōw-* (525,12).

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Osm. *yel*, *yelpik*, “rheumatism.” Another word that must derive from *yēl* is *yelwi*, “magic” (458, 12 as-sihr) [but cf. ED, 919: “The semantic connection . . . is probably fortuitous.”] It is found parallel with *arwiš* (see *infra*) at A. von Le Coq, “Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho II,” APAW, 1919, 5.9. For use in Uighur texts see Arat, *Eski Türk Şiiri*, p. 310. In the *Dīwān* its use is largely confined to the “fascination” of the eye of the beloved (see verse s.v. *yelwi*: verse at 601,13).

<sup>44</sup> F. Grenard, *Mission scientifique dans la Haute Asie II: Le Turkestan et le Tibet* . . . (Paris, 1898), p. 254-5.

<sup>42</sup> The translation of this phrase is that of A. Guillaume, *The Traditions of Islam* (Oxford, 1924), p. 119. Guillaume interprets “saf’ah” here as “jaundice.”

Another treatment is mentioned s.v. *isriq* (62,11): "a word used when curing a child of Sa'fah or Evil Eye; you fumigate him in the face and say *isriq isriq*, meaning 'Be bitten, O jinni!'" Kāšgarī's intent is to connect the phrase with the verbal root *isir-*, "to bite" (cf. ED, 250). However, in a text given by Menges<sup>45</sup> that describes the driving out of a demon, *isriq* is the name of the fumigator, consisting of herbs in a cup, which the sorcerer uses to evoke the helping spirits; and the word is explicitly connected with *is* "smoke" (line 13: *Bu pārixon qolideki isriqniñ isini ēigerip . . .*)

In more serious cases, presumably, you call in the Qām (see VIII below) who will prepare a spell, known as *arwaš* ~ *arwiš*.<sup>46</sup> Examples: *qām arwaš arwādi* (144,17); *arwiš arwaldi* (130,9); *qāmlār qamuḡ arwašdi* (125,6), "The diviners murmured magical phrases, or else they prepared a spell against demonic possession, or the like" (haynamat al-kahanah bi-kalām wa-kaḡālīka ida raqaw min sa'fah wa-naḡwihā). We also find the phrase *sōkālkā suwšādi* (569,17, from *suwša-*, "to whisper"), meaning "He prepared a spell (raqqā) for the sick man."

A preventative medicine is known—*āgit* (37,10)—consisting of a mixture of saffron and other herbs; "it is smeared on babies' faces to ward off Sa'fah and Evil Eye." Charms are also used. The word in Oguz dialect is *bitig* (193,10 al-ʿūdāh; otherwise *bitig* means "book", cf. I above); we also find the combination *yēl qovuz bitigi* (516,16 ʿūdāt al-jinn wa-s-sa'fah). A different precautionary measure is amulets—in the form of gems, lions' paws, and the like—which are attached to the necks of horses: *monḡuq* (239,12). On the same order are scarecrows that are set up in orchards and vegetable patches to keep away the Evil Eye: *abāqi* (80,17), *kōsgük* (410,16).

On the source of Evil Eye Kāšgarī says nothing, nor does he give the Turkic equivalent. We find one clue s.v. *eliq-* (105,4), which means, of a man, "to be vile or corrupt" (la'uma), and, of a wound, "to fester" (tanaffaṭa, fasada). The verb is also used, Kāšgarī states, of "anything that becomes spoiled from the glance of a menstruating woman,

a confined woman, or one polluted" (kull šayʿ fasa-da min nazrat ḡaʿīḡ aw nufasāʿ aw junub).<sup>47</sup>

#### VIII. DIVINERS; QĀM AND YATČI.

Kāšgarī mentions two functions of the Qām or "diviner" (513,15 al-kāhin).

The first is the divining of the future, called *irq* (33,13). This word is defined as: "diving, taking omens, and bringing out what is hidden" (al-kahanah wa-l-faʿl wa-ixrāj aḡ-ḡamīr; cf. V above and note 36). Example: *qām irqḡādi* (635,5).

The second function is the preparing of spells as magical cures (see VII above, discussion of *arwaš*). This is the only function that is reflected in the contemporary monumental poem *Qutaḡḡu Bilig* (see note 13).

(line 4362): *bu yel yāklig iqkā oḡiḡu kārāk* "This is the one who must murmur incantations against a sickness caused by a jinn or a devil;" (line 4365): *bu aymiš bitig tutsa yāklār yīrar* "If one holds on to the charm spoken by him, the devils will stay away."

In *Qutaḡḡu Bilig* the Qām is identified as *aḡsunči* or *muʿazzim*, "charm-monger," and is contrasted with the physician, *otači*, who treats bodily illness with herbs and other medicines.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Clauson (ED, 138) reads *alik-*, and interprets the phrase in a purely medical sense: "anything that turns septic owing to mishaps in menstruation or parturition or to running sores." I prefer to interpret it as referring to witchcraft; the baneful effect of the glance of (or an evil glance upon) women in their periods or after childbirth is common to many traditions. As to the vocalization of this verb, it must be connected with *ēl kiši*, "a vile (laʿīm) man" and *ēl qūš*, "vulture" (36,7). In *Qutaḡḡu Bilig*, lines 4589 and 5626, *ēl* meaning "vile" is spelled, in Ms. A, "ʿL. We also have Mg. *eliye*, "kite," doubtless from the same word. Note also that in the *Diwān* manuscript (105,3-5) the alif has kasrah as well as fathah in most of the forms. The semantic connection is more tenuous between this *ēl* and the homonymous words meaning "courtyard," "realm," and "peace." In *Qutaḡḡu Bilig* the courtyard is the "ignoble" part of the house, opposed to *tōr*, the place of honor; cf. note 19 above.

<sup>48</sup> At line 1065 *otači* is opposed to *qām* with the same sense of contrast; elsewhere (2002, 3873, 5244) *qām* appears to be synonymous with *otači*. Among the contemporary Khorezm Uzbeks a similar distinction exists between the *folbin*, "soothsayer," and the *parkhon*, "conjurer;" the latter is also distinct from the *tabīb*, "healer, witch doctor." See Snesev, *op. cit.*, Part III (vol. 10, Summer, 1971), p. 3f.

<sup>45</sup> "Volkskundliche Texte . . .," XXXII.12f.

<sup>46</sup> For some modern examples of such magic formulas, see J. Castagné, "Magie et exorcisme chez les Kazak-Kirghizes et autres peuples turks orientaux," *Revue des Études Islamiques* IV (1930), pp. 130, 133. They are recited by the *arbaouchi*, "conjurer."

A special type of divination (kahānah) consists of the bringing on of rain and wind by means of certain stones. This is called *yāt* (514,12) ~ *yat* (445,16), and the diviner (kāhin) in this case is known as *Yātçi* (578,17). He is presumably a special class of *Qām*, though the word *qām* is not mentioned in connection with *yāt*. In a revealing entry it is the Beg or ruler who orders this conjury to be performed (440,10 *beg yatlattı*). Of *yāt*, Kāšgarī remarks (445,17): "It is generally known among them. I myself witnessed it in Yağma. It was done to put out a fire that had broken out. Snow fell in the summer!—by the grace of God most high—and put out the fire in my presence."<sup>49</sup>

Both *Qām* and *Yātçi* receive a fee for their services: *ürüñ* (79,17 *hulwān al-kāhin*). They say: *āliḡ ürüñi bēr*, literally "Give me white of hand."<sup>50</sup>

Kāšgarī's attitude toward the *Qām* and *Yātçi* is strikingly different from his attitude toward, say, the *Toyin* (see I above). Similar sentiments are expressed by Marvazī<sup>51</sup> who also calls the rain sorcerer "kāhin". The Turks are generally known among Arab authors for their magical skills; compare the following remark in the *Fihrist* of an-Nadīm (written 988): "The Turks have a science of magic ('ilm min as-sihr). I was told by a very reliable source that they perform marvels for routing armies, killing enemies, crossing waters, and passing over great distances in short periods."<sup>52</sup>

#### EXCURSUS: "SHAMANISM"

I have refrained from using the word "shaman" to translate *Qām*. If "shaman" is defined to mean the same as diviner, soothsayer, conjurer, witch-doctor, magician, or the like, than the *Qām* is a shaman. But if the defining characteristics of "shaman" include: 1) initiatory sicknesses and dreams, 2) employing "archaic techniques of ecstasy," in particular dancing with special costume and drum, and 3) magical flight to the celestial regions and the underworld,<sup>53</sup> then there is no

<sup>49</sup> For comparative materials on *yāt* see Doerfer, *op. cit.*, Vol. I (Band XVI, 1963), heading no. 157.

<sup>50</sup> As in the traditional words of the gypsy fortune-teller, "Cross my palm with silver."

<sup>51</sup> According to Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, s.v. "Turk-i-stān."

<sup>52</sup> *Al-Fihrist* (Cairo, 1347 H.), p. 430; cf. B. Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm*, 2 vols. (New York, 1970), Vol. II, p. 726, a slightly different translation.

<sup>53</sup> See Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (Princeton University Press, 1964), *passim*.

evidence that the *Qām* is a shaman, at least as he is reflected in the *Dīwān Luḡāt al-Turk* and *Qutaḡju Bilig*.

To be sure, there is no evidence that he is not. It is an *argumentum e silentio*. The paucity of material, both in Kāšgarī and in other pre-Mongol sources,<sup>54</sup> that can properly be interpreted as "shamanic," leads to the conclusion: the heathen Turks before Islam were *not* "shamanists." This negative conclusion is a corrective to the assertion, found in most of the textbooks, that they *were* shamanists.<sup>55</sup> It also clears the ground for an investigation as to what the religion of the Turks *was* (assuming they all had the same belief system) and how this differed from the religion of the Scythians, the Mongols, etc.

#### IX. MARVELOUS MINERALS, PLANTS, AND ANIMALS

Certain stones have magical powers. The *yāt* stones (see VIII above) are not otherwise identified; they are the bezoar, according to Doerfer (see note 49). Another candidate for the bezoar is *urumdāy* (90,11), identified only as "a stone used as an antidote to poison."

*Qāš*—which is jade (166,12 *yašm*)—is defined (511,3 f.) as "a pure stone, white or black." The two varieties come from two different rivers in the vicinity of Khotan; and the white one is set in a ring as a protection against thunderbolts, thirst, and lightning. Elsewhere (453,16) we find the adage (*ḥikmat at-turk*): "Lightning strikes not the one who has *Qāš*" (*kinnig bilā qāš bolsa yašin yaqmās*); and Kāšgarī's remark: "If it is wound in a piece of cotton cloth (and placed) in fire, it does not burn, nor does the cotton. This has been tested (*hādā mujarrab!*) Also, when a thirsty man takes it into his mouth, it takes the edge off his thirst." Similar properties of jade are reported by Bīrūnī who, however, is more skeptical.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> See note 5 above; cf. also M. Hermanns, *Schamanen - Pseudo-schamanen, Erläuter und Heilbringer*, 3 vols (Wiesbaden, 1970), Vol. I, p. 206f.

<sup>55</sup> E.g.: C. Brockelmann, *History of the Islamic Peoples* (Capricorn Books, 1960), p. 164; J. J. Saunders, *A History of Medieval Islam* (London, 1965), p. 141; G. E. von Grunbaum, *Classical Islam: A History 600-1258* (Chicago, 1970), p. 67; B. Spuler, "The Disintegration of the Caliphate in the East," *The Cambridge History of Islam*, 2 vols. (London, 1970), Vol. I, p. 147.

<sup>56</sup> A. Z. V. Togan, ed., *Bīrūnī's Picture of the World* (Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No.

In the entry *tāmūr*, “iron,” Kāšgarī reports the following (182,6): “The Qırqız, Yabāqu, Qifčāq, and others, when they make a person swear an oath or become party to a covenant with him (idā hallafū insānan aw axadū ‘anhu mīṭāqan),<sup>57</sup> place an unsheathed sword crosswise before him and say the following: *bu kōk kirsūn qizil čiqsūn*, which means, ‘May this iron go in blue and come out red’—that is to say, ‘bloody’—if you break this treaty. This means that he will be killed by iron, so that the iron be avenged upon him; for they regard iron as possessing great power (yu‘az-zimūna l-ḥadīd).”<sup>58</sup>

*Qumlāq* (239,8)—which is hops (ED, 628)—is defined as follows: “a plant similar to bindweed (lablāb) which grows in the Qifčāq regions, and is used in preparing a drink mixed with honey. When this plant is brought on board ship, the sea becomes agitated (yamūju), and the passengers nearly drown.” There is perhaps here a fanciful connection with *qōm*, “wave”; or else a reflection of the effect of beer.

Two love potions are mentioned, one a plant, the other the bones of a bird. *Siḡun oti* (206,10), literally “stag plant,” is mandrake (P. *istarang*); the definition is: “a certain plant whose root is shaped like a man and which is used as a remedy

for impotence . . . . It is found as male and female: the male is for men, the female for women.” The *kākūk* (409,13), or hawk-eagle (zummaḡ), is “a bird whose bones are used for incantations, love-charms, or spells (fi n-nayrinjiyāt wa-l-juyyāt wa-ruqyatihā).”

Another animal part with magical properties is *xutu* (541,3),<sup>59</sup> which is walrus horn or narwhal ivory. It is defined thus: “the horn of a sea fish, imported from Šīn; it is also said to be the root of a tree. Knife handles are made from it. It is used to test for poison in food by shaking it up with broth, or the like, in a bowl; the food boils up without a fire (if it is poisoned); or else this horn is placed on top of a bowl and it runs with water, but without steam (if poison is present).”

Information about several animals in the *Diwān* is drawn from bestiary lore, not from experience. Of *toḡa* the tiger (605,6), for example, we read: “it is the one that kills the elephant.” The bird *kūzkūnāk* (263,17) “resembles the saker falcon and the warren lizard (‘azāyah), and lives on wind.” Similarly the wolf, *bōri* (317,6), “fasts one week in each month and during this period lives on wind”—this explains the gnashing of wolves’ teeth. Another bird, *kōk topulḡān* (259,4), or mountain swallow (*samām*), “is said to have steel in its feathers and to bore through mountain peaks to the other side. I was told this,” Kāšgarī remarks, “by someone to whom I am beholden for some favors.” A third semi-fabulous bird is the *toḡril* (242,11): “a bird of prey; it kills a thousand geese and eats one.”<sup>60</sup>

Kāšgarī probably never saw a crocodile (*timsāḡ*) or a dragon (*ṭu‘bān*), but several animal names are defined with these words in his dictionary. Of the two words defined “crocodile”—*alāwān* (82,4) and *nāḡ* (513,3)—the second at least is known to be of foreign origin (Skr. *nāga*; ED, 776). The Turks used *nāḡ* only in the calendar;

53, Delhi, n. d.), p. 82-83. “They claim,” says Bīrūnī, “that it protects from the evil eye and from lightning and thunderbolts. As for evil eye, this is an old wives’ tale (ḥadīṭ ‘ammī). As for lightning, I saw someone try to prove it by passing a thin cloth over the surface of some jade and then placing a live coal on top of it, and it did not burn; but this is not a property special to jade—steel mirrors will do the same thing. As for thunderbolts, they are not at all resisted by it, in fact they melt it . . . .”

<sup>57</sup> “Oath” (al-ḥalīf) is *and* (33,11). Cf. Inan, *op. cit.* 317-330; E. Esin, “‘And’: The Cup Rites in Inner-Asian and Turkish Art,” *Forschungen zur Kunst Asiens* (In Memoriam Kurt Erdmann, Istanbul, 1969). “Covenant” (al-mīṭāq, al-‘ahd) is *bičig* (186, 14) ~ *bičgās* (231,1).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Snesev, *op. cit.*, Part II (vol. 9, Spring, 1971), p. 345; H. Serruys, “A note on arrows and oaths among the Mongols,” *JAOS* 78 (1958), 279-294. When a Mamluk sultan had his emirs swear on the Qur’ān that they would not betray him, “they were made to pass under two crossed swords, after the custom of the Turks, who regard this as a most sacred oath” (Ibn Iyās, *An Account of the Ottoman Conquest of Egypt*, tr. W. H. Salmon, London, 1921, p. 36).

<sup>59</sup> Read thus; see Robert Dankoff, “A note on *khutu* and *chatuq*,” *JAOS* 93.4 (1973), pp. 542-4.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. A. Caferoḡlu, [Abū Hayyān] *Kitāb al-İdrāk li-lisān al-Atrāk* (Istanbul, 1931), p. 64 (Arabic text): *toḡrul*, “a well-known bird; when it is dispatched against cranes it tears apart one after another, finally killing them all, but then eats only the first.” According to Rašīd ad-Dīn the *toḡrul* is a fabulous bird, like the ‘anḡā’ of the Maghrib; its beak and claws are hard as steel, and with one thrust it kills two to three hundred birds (cited in Doerfer, *op. cit.*, Vol II, heading no. 1345).



for the animal "dragon" they used *nāg yilān*.<sup>61</sup> The native term is *bökā* (545,13), defined as "large dragon" (*tu'ban 'azīm*). Kāšgarī also cites the proverb: *yeti başlıq yel bökā*, "a dragon with seven heads," but does not explain it. However, a seven-headed dragon killed by a hero is well-known in Turkish folklore.<sup>62</sup> The element *yel* is probably the word meaning "demon" (see VII above). The word *bökā* is also used as an epithet for famous warriors (*abṭāl*); one such was Bökā Buḡraç, the Yabāqu chieftain, who was defeated in a famous battle by the Ghāzi, Arslān Tegīn (see I above).

*Bulān* (208,10) is the Turkic word for "elk" (ED, 343), but to Kāšgarī it was a fabulous beast: "name of a large wild animal hunted in the Qifčāq regions. It has one horn, shaped like a jar, hollowed out and erect toward the sky, in which snow and rain accumulate. The female kneels down so that the male may drink from her horn, and the male kneels down so that the female may drink from his." If this elk sounds like a unicorn, it is not accidental. Classical authors such as Pliny describe the elk as having jointless legs; and it is

one of the attributes of the fabled unicorn that it has no articulation in its legs and feet.<sup>63</sup>

Perhaps the strangest lore in the *Dīwān* concerns *baraq* (190,3), the shaggy dog (*kalb ahlāb*): "The Turks claim that when the vulture grows old it lays two eggs and then hatches them. From one emerges this dog, called Baraq—it is the swiftest running of dogs and the most reliable in the hunt; from the other emerges a chick, the last of its chicks." Elsewhere I have pointed to shamanic analogues to this notice, and suggested a Qipčaq provenance.<sup>64</sup> It is true that Kāšgarī explicitly relates his bit of lore on Baraq to "the Turks"—here, as throughout the *Dīwān*, most likely as distinguished from the Oğuz and Qifčāq. Nevertheless it is clear that much of Kāšgarī's animal and plant lore pertains especially to the northern regions.

A case in point is our final fabulous beast, *kāylik* (522,7) or *kāyik kiši* (518,16, literally "wild man"). In each of these entries the definition is simply: *an-nasnās*. Under *kāylik* the further information is given that people who walk looking this way and that (*mutalaffitan*), such as those who are bewildered (*madhūš*) or wild (*waḥšī*), are likened to this beast and are called *kāylik kiši*. In addition we find on Kāšgarī's map, in the extreme Northeast, between the great sandy tract (*ar-raml*) and the territories of wild beasts (*ma-wāḍī' al-wuḥūš*), a space in which is written: "It is said that in these deserts live the Nasnās" (*yuqālu fī hāḍihi l-fayāfi yaskunu n-nasnās*).

What is the Nasnās? Lane<sup>65</sup> cites a number of fanciful definitions, including "a certain beast . . . having the form of a man with one eye and leg and arm . . ." The lexicographers place him variously in the islands of China, on the coast of the Sea of India, in Yemen, etc. "In the present day," notes Lane, "this appellation is applied to a pigmy: and also, to an ape."

Mas'ūdī<sup>66</sup> remarks, in his discussion of Nasnās, that people in the East say they are in the West

<sup>61</sup> Cf. H. Lüders, "Zur Geschichte des ostasiatischen Tierkreises," *SPAW*, 1933, 998-1022; p. 1009: "Wenn nach Al-Kāšgarī die zentralasiatischen Türken im 11. Jahrhundert den Drachen des Zyklus *nāk* nennen, so werden sie das dem Kučischen entlehnt haben, wo das dem Sanskrit entlehnte *nāk* die Übersetzung des chinesischen *lung* ist . . ."

<sup>62</sup> E.g.: the one killed by Salur Kazan in *The Book of Dede Korkut* (tr. F. Sümer, A. E. Uysal, and W. S. Walker, Univ. of Texas Press, 1972), p. 160; the one killed by Sari Saltuk (see J. K. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, 1937 [reprinted London: Luzac, 1965], p. 51). Kāšgarī apparently did not know the Qipčaq words for "dragon," *sazağan* and *āwrān*. *Sazağan* appears in Codex Cumanicus, translated as "dracon;" in the Tarjumān Turkī wa-'Arabī (M. Houtsma, *Ein Türkisch-Arabisches Glossar*, Leiden, 1894), p. 11 (Arabic text), as "tinnīn"; and in the *Bulḡat al-Muštāq* (A. Zajackowski, *Vocabulaire Arabe-Kiptchak* . . ., Warszawa, 1958), p. 11, as "tu'ban"; cf. B. Atalay, *Ettuhfet-üz-zekiye fil-lūgat-it-türkiyye* (Istanbul, 1945), 10 b 12: "tu'ban = ilan, ājdīḥa, saḡsaḡan, sawulčaq. *Āwrān* appears in the Tarjumān Turkī wa-'Arabī, translated as "tu'ban"; cf. . . . *Tarama Sözlüğü*, Vol. III (Ankara, 1967), p. 1574: *evren*, "dragon"; . . . *Derleme Sözlüğü*, Vol. V (Ankara, 1972), p. 1813, "big, hero, etc.; big snake, monster." In the *Dīwān* (67, 8; ED, 13) *āwrān* is a type of oven I

<sup>63</sup> See R. Ettinghausen, *Studies in Muslim Iconography*, I. *The Unicorn* (Freer Gallery of Art Occasional Papers 1,3, Washington, 1950), p. 99-100.

<sup>64</sup> Robert Dankoff, "Baraq and Burāq," *Central Asiatic Journal* XV.2, 1971, 102-117. To the evidence from Qipčaq glossaries cited on p. 106, add: *Kitab al-Idrak* . . ., p. 74 (Arabic text): *qilbaraq*, "a wooly hunting dog."

<sup>65</sup> E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* . . ., 8 vols. (London, 1863-93), Vol. 8, p. 2785.

<sup>66</sup> *Murūj aḍ-Ḍahab*, Beirut, 1965, Vol. II, p. 208.



and people in the West say they are in the East; everyone places them farthest from themselves. In an anecdote reported by Nizāmī-i ‘Arūḍī<sup>67</sup> a caravan “travelling towards Tamghāj” comes across a wild man which the guides “who were Turks” explain to be a Nasnās. Marvazī<sup>68</sup> writes: “It is said that in the deserts stretching between Badakhshān and Kāshgar there is a considerable number of this animal.” In commenting on this

---

<sup>67</sup> E. G. Browne, [Nidhāmī-i-‘Arūḍī] *Chahār Maqāla* (Hertford, 1899), p. 18-19.

<sup>68</sup> V. Minorsky, *Sharaf al-Zamān Ṭāhir Marvazī on China, the Turks and India* (London, 1942), p. 60.

passage, Minorsky<sup>69</sup> cites Muṭahhar IV,92 who says that a kind of Nasnās is found in the region of Bāmīr, which is a desert stretching between Kashmīr, Tibet, Vakhān and China; “Kāshghari,” says Minorsky, “born in the vicinity of Pamir, had to remove the *nasnās* to a farther *terra incognita* . . .”

The only other Turkic dictionary I can find that mentions Nasnās is one of the Qipčaq glossaries,<sup>70</sup> where, however, there is a blank space next to the Arabic word.

---

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>70</sup> *Ettuhfet-üz-zekiye* . . ., 36 a 13.